

1959 Blast on Reds Recalled

Recent News Proving Nixon Right in Attack on Castro

By Roscoe Drummond

WASHINGTON.

When the facts come into the open showing that former Vice-President Richard M. Nixon was right when many others were misled and that he was unfairly criticized when he got into political trouble, somebody should be willing to stand up and say so.

Two news developments demonstrate:

1—Mr. Nixon in April, 1959, was remarkably perceptive and far ahead of most others in recognizing that Fidel Castro was pro-Communist and in so warning both the White House and the State Department in a written memorandum.

2—It was not Mr. Nixon's actions which provoked the stoning and spitting episodes which endangered him and his wife and marred his Latin American trip but it was the Communists who planned these hostile demonstrations well in advance.

I am not attempting to appraise Mr. Nixon's political past nor further its future, but I do feel that when new facts put a fresh light on events, one ought to give some credit where credit is due.

On Changing Dictators

We now know, on his own say-so, that Castro was a committed Communist before he overthrew the Batista regime—thus exchanging one dictatorship for another—and that, while pretending otherwise so as not to alert the Cuban people, was preparing to fasten a Communist regime upon his nation.

But turn your mind back to the events of two and a half years ago. Only a few months earlier Castro's army had taken over in Havana and Castro was insisting to one and all that his only objective was social reform and a democratic Cuba under free institutions. In April of that year he was here in Washington as the guest of the American Society of Newspapers. An informal meeting in Nixon's office between the Vice-President and Castro was arranged. One who helped to bring it about was the Chicago Tribune's Jules Dubois, a leading anti-Communist correspondent in Latin America whose biography of Castro strongly discounted all reports that Castro had Communist leanings. Not many saw it differently at the time.

But after a long conversation with Castro, Vice-President Nixon wrote down his impressions in a private memorandum for the information of President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Herter. He concluded: "Castro seems to be sincere, he

is either incredibly naive about Communism or is already under Communist discipline."

That, I think, will stand as a prescient judgment which deserves recognition. Castro was "under Communist discipline" at his own initiative; he was "sincere"—that is, sincerely Communist, and I do not doubt that it will develop that he is "incredibly naive" if he thinks that Communism is going to promote the kind of Cuba he then said he wanted.

On His Curbing Press

At another point in his 1959 memorandum, Mr. Nixon predicted that Castro would "take some rather drastic steps toward curtailing freedom of the press in Cuba—as he later did."

He also quoted Castro as saying that on occasion "when the (Cuban) Communists overplayed their hand, my people put them in their place." Mr. Nixon added that Castro implied that "this would be the situation in the future in the event the Communists tried to come to power."

By deception and coercion, Castro has now put the Communists in power through his own action. Now that the Cuban people are no longer deceived, they will more than ever be disposed "to put the Communists in their place" when they can find the means to do so.

As to the Latin American student riots of 1958, a United Press dispatch from Rio de Janeiro quotes three Peruvian Communists "involved in attacks on former Vice-President Nixon" as having told the Moral Rearmament Assembly of the Americas of their part in the demonstrations and how they regretted their initiative.

Mr. Nixon may have a large, a lesser or no political future, but he deserves a just estimate of what he has done well.